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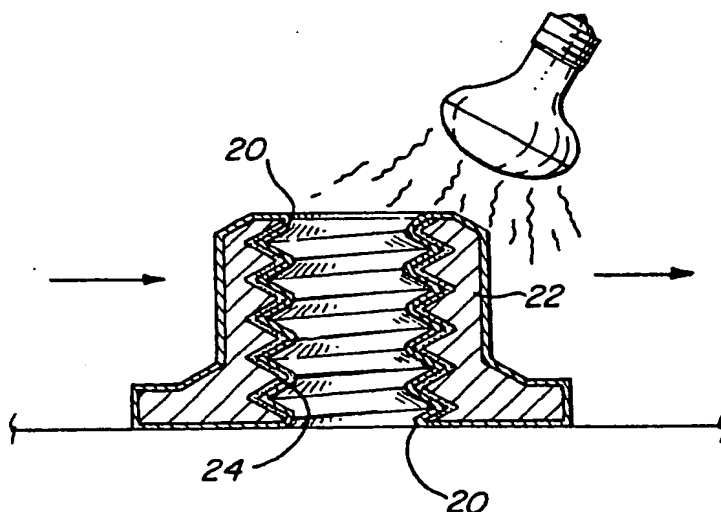
(71) Applicant: **BUELL INDUSTRIES, INC.**  
**130 Huntingdon Avenue PO Box 2548**  
**Waterbury Connecticut 06723(US)**

(72) Inventor: **Peterson, Francis C.**  
**89 Plumb Brook Road**  
**Woodbury Connecticut 06798(US)**

(74) Representative: **Warren, Anthony Robert et al**  
**BARON & WARREN, 18 South End,**  
**Kensington**  
**London W8 5BU(GB)**

## (54) Method of thread masking and thread masked part.

(57) A method of masking the threads (24) of a nut (22) to prevent adhesion of coatings is disclosed, which comprises the steps of applying a film of a heat activated foaming polymeric material (20) to the threads (24) of the nut (22) prior to exposing the threads to a coating, for example of paint, and heating the foaming material subsequent to the application of the coating of paint thereto. The foaming material (20) comprises a plastisol, preferably including a vinyl compound, which most preferably is polyvinyl chloride. The foaming material further comprises a blowing agent, preferably azodicarbonamide.



**FIG. 3**

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## METHOD OF THREAD MASKING AND THREAD MASKED PART

DISCLOSURE5 Field of the Invention

The present invention relates to a method of masking the threads in a threaded part and a thread masked part that will prevent paint and other coatings from adhering to and clogging the threads of such parts.

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Background of the Invention

The steps of painting and baking the paint on an automobile body and other manufactured items typically involves applying paint to the entire item, for example, by electrochemical deposition of paint onto the item. As a consequence, screw threads in metal parts of the item will be covered with paint. This coating of paint will clog the screw threads, making the later insertion of bolts or other threaded fasteners more difficult and time consuming than if there were no such paint coating.

The paint clogged threads increase the amount of torque necessary to secure together threaded parts, and prevent such threaded parts from being smoothly secured together. The paint clogged threads may also cause problems of cross-threading of a nut and bolt, leading to stripped threads and a consequent loss of the time and money needed to replace the threaded parts. Replacing a threaded part may also cause problems if the corrosion resistant coatings applied to products such as automobile bodies is compromised.

Two primary techniques have been used in the past to overcome these problems of paint clogging. One technique has been to insert a plastic sleeve into nuts and other threaded apertures. However, this is a tedious and time consuming procedure, as it requires mounting such sleeves into numerous threaded apertures in the manufactures item. Another technique is to apply a coating of polytetrafluoroethylene (PTFE) to the threads needing paint protection. However, this procedure has been found to be costly because of the cost of the PTFE material.

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SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The threads of a threaded part are masked with a film of a heat activated foaming polymeric material. The film of foaming material is a plastisol, preferably including a vinyl compound, most preferably a polyvinyl chloride, although other polymers may be employed in a plastisol having the necessary foaming qualities. A blowing agent is provided to cause foaming upon heating. Preferably, the blowing agent is azodicarbonamide. The film is applied to the threads of the threaded part prior to the application of paint or other coatings. After the paint coating has been applied, the foaming material is heated, causing the film of foaming material to bubble, breaking up the paint coating and detaching the foaming material from the threads.

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BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE ACCOMPANYING DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of a nut prior to application of a film of foaming material.

FIG. 2 is a cross-sectional view of a nut showing a film of the foaming material applied to the threads thereof.

FIG. 3 is a cross-sectional view of a nut of FIG. 2 showing the film of the foaming material being foamed by application of heat.

FIG. 4 is a cross-sectional view of the foamed material pushed out of a nut by the action of a threaded screw fitted into the nut of FIG. 3.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

A heat activated foaming polymeric material 20 is applied to the threads of a threaded fastener part, such as the nut 22 shown in FIGS. 1 and 2, to mask the threads 24 so that paint and other coatings applied to the part do not adhere to the threads and clog them. The threaded fastener part may also be an aperture in a manufactured part in which threads have been tapped, or may be a threaded screw. After the application of paint or other coatings, the foaming material 20 is heated, for example as shown in FIG. 3, until the material foams, so that the paint coating is broken up. The foaming material and paint coating are easily removed from the threads 24 of the fastener part, for example, by the scraping action of a screw 26 when the nut 24 and screw 26 are screwed together.

The heat activated foaming material is preferably a plastisol comprising a vinyl compound, preferably polyvinyl chloride. The foaming material further comprises a blowing agent, preferably azodicarbonamide.

The method of thread masking and thread masked part of the present invention are further disclosed by the following example:

EXAMPLE

A heat activated foaming polymeric material 20 comprising by weight:

Polyvinyl chloride resins	45.00%
Silicate filler	11.00%
Pigment	.50%
Zinc octoate	2.00%
Azodicarbonamide	1.50%
Phtalate plasticizers	40.00%

is applied to the threads 24 of threaded nut 22 shown in FIG. 1 by a spray so that the threads 24 are covered with a film of the foaming material 20. The nut 22 is then assembled into a automotive body and located to receive the screws of a door mounting which will be assembled into the automotive body after the body is painted. The automotive body is painted by electrochemical deposition of paint on the body dipped in a paint bath. The automotive body and the thread masked nut 22 are then baked in an oven at about 2400 to about 3700 degrees Fahrenheit to bake the paint. During the paint baking step the azodicarbonamide degrades and generates a gas which causes the material 20 to foam, breaking up the paint coating on the nut threads 24, as shown in FIG. 3.

A threaded screw 26 is then inserted into the thread masked nut 22 as part of the mounting of the automobile door to the automotive body. As shown in FIG. 4, the screw 26 pushes the foamed material 20 and paint coating out of the nut 22. The screw 26 and is securely same torque as would be required to secure the same screw 26 and nut 22 together where no paint had been applied thereto.

The use of the thread masked part provides an economy unavailable in prior art approaches to the problem of paint clogged threads in a fastener part. Unlike the use of a plastic insert to protect the threads, the present invention requires no additional step of removing the insert before securing together threaded parts. Unlike the use of expensive PTFE coatings to minimize paint adhesion to the threads, the present invention uses a much more economical vinyl compound and blowing agent.

Therefore, the present invention represents a great improvement over prior art treatments of the problem of paint clogged threads.

Claims

1. A method of masking the threaded portion of a threaded fastener part to prevent adhesion of coatings, comprising the steps of:  
applying a film of a heat activated foaming polymeric material to the threaded portion of a threaded part prior to applying a coating to said part;

heating said foaming material subsequent to the application of a coating thereto.

2. A method of masking in accordance with claim 1, wherein said foaming material comprises a plastisol.

3. A method of masking in accordance with claim 2, wherein said foaming material comprises a vinyl compound.

5 4. A method of masking in accordance with claim 3, wherein said foaming material comprises a polyvinyl chloride.

5. A method of masking in accordance with claim 2, wherein said foaming material further comprises a blowing agent.

10 6. A method of masking in accordance with claim 5, wherein said blowing agent comprises azodicarbonamide.

7. A thread masked threaded fastener part, comprising:

a threaded fastener part; and

a coating of a heat activated foaming polymeric material applied to the threads of said part.

15 8. A thread masked fastener part in accordance with claim 7, wherein said foaming material comprises a plastisol.

9. A thread masked fastener part in accordance with claim 8, wherein said foaming material comprises a vinyl compound.

10. A thread masked fastener part in accordance with claim 9, wherein said foaming material comprises polyvinyl chloride.

20 11. A thread masked fastener part in accordance with claim 8, wherein said foaming material further comprises a blowing agent.

12. A thread masked fastener part in accordance with claim 11, wherein said blowing agent comprises azodicarbonamide.

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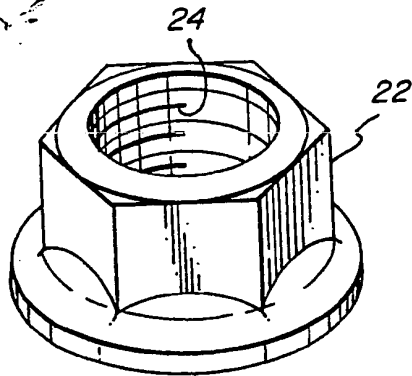


FIG. 1

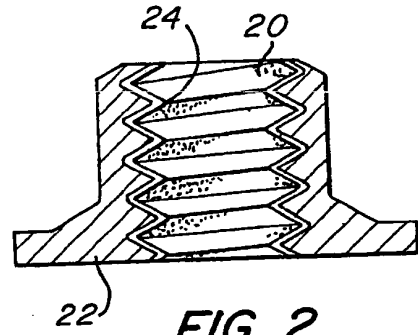


FIG. 2

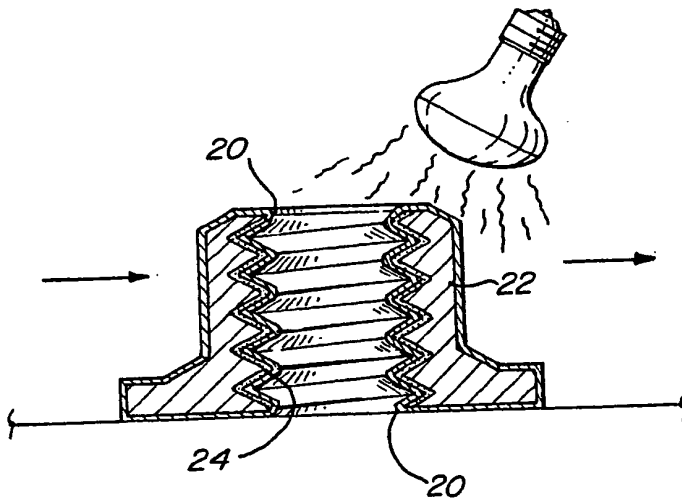


FIG. 3

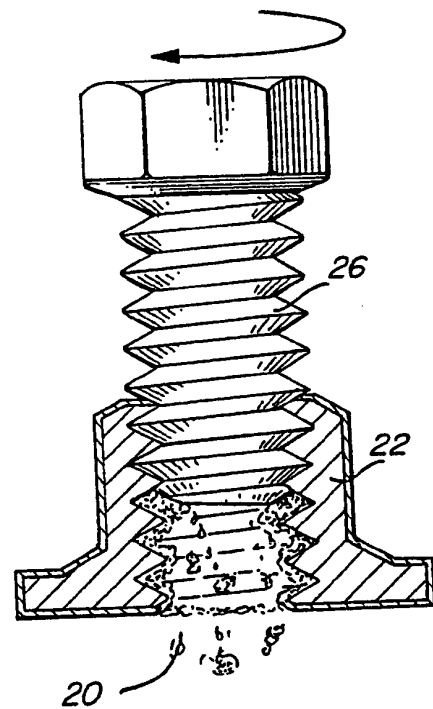


FIG. 4

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# EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number

EP 89 30 6517

DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT			
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int. Cl.5)
Y	EP-A-0 303 268 (NAGOYA OIL CHEMICAL) * Column 5, line 54 - column 6, line 57; column 14, line 45 - column 15, line 33; column 1, lines 13-31 *	1,5,7,11	B 05 D 1/32 B 05 D 5/00 B 05 D 7/22
A	---	6	
Y	EP-A-0 260 657 (NYLOK FASTENER) * Column 8, lines 21-56 *	1,5,7,11	
A	US-A-4 701 348 (G.F. NEVILLE) * Column 2, lines 8-31 *		
A	US-A-3 483 056 (W.D. CHEESMAN) * Column 1, lines 13-22 *	1	
A	US-A-3 642 564 (R.R. WALKER) * Column 1, line 53 - column 2, line 67 *	2-4,8-10	
A	US-A-4 210 567 (B. KOSTERS) * Column 5, lines 46-52 *	2-4,8-12	
E	DERWENT DATABASE WPI/L AN 89-300 165 & US-A-4 856 954 (F.C. PETERSON) * Whole abstract *	2-6,8-12	
The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search THE HAGUE		Date of completion of the search 27-02-1990	Examiner FRIDEN N.
CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS			
<p>X : particularly relevant if taken alone Y : particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category A : technological background O : non-written disclosure P : intermediate document</p> <p>I : theory or principle underlying the invention E : earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date D : document cited in the application L : document cited for other reasons ----- &amp; : member of the same patent family, corresponding document</p>			

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